

PROPOSED
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A mower head comprising:
a deck having at least three sides and at least one
side wall depending from said deck;
at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said
5 deck on an axis extending through said deck, said deck being
disposed above and generally parallel to said blade; and
a guard assembly comprising:
an actuating member mounted on said deck,
a guard attached to said actuating member and
10 pivotally attached to said deck via a hinge which is mounted
to two of said at least three sides and extends at an obtuse
angle in relation to two of said at least three sides of said
deck, and
a flap depending from said guard and movable
15 in relation to said guard, said flap being oriented in a plane
spaced from a plane of said guard, wherein said ^{entire} plane of said
guard is coplanar with a plane of said deck, in one
orientation of said guard.

2. (Original) The mower head of claim 1 wherein
said actuating member comprises a hydraulic cylinder and a
piston assembly.

3. (Original) The mower head of claim 1 wherein
said deck further comprises a flap depending from one of said
at least three sides of said deck.

4. (Original) The mower head of claim 3 wherein
said guard includes a first wall which comprises an
approximately straight edge and a second wall which comprises
a plurality of angled sections.

5. (Previously Amended) The mower head of claim 4 wherein two of said deck at least three sides are normal to each other and a third of said at least three sides is positioned at an obtuse angle in relation to said two of said 5 deck at least three sides.

6. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 1 further comprising a hinge for pivotally mounting said guard to said deck.

7. (Previously Amended) The mower head of claim 1 wherein said actuating member is mounted on said deck at a location spaced from said hinge.

8. (Original) The mower head of claim 1 wherein a top surface of said guard and a top surface of said deck are located in the same plane.

9. (Currently Amended) A mower head comprising:
a deck having at least three sides;
at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on an axis extending through said deck, said deck being 5 disposed above and generally parallel to said blade; and
a guard assembly comprising:
an actuating member mounted on said deck,
a hinge extending between and mounted to two of said at least three sides of said deck at an angle with 10 respect to said two of said at least three sides, ~~wherein an axis of said actuating member is approximately perpendicular to an axis of said hinge,~~
a guard attached to said actuating member and pivotally attached to said deck via said hinge, and
15 a flap which depends from said guard and is movable in relation to said guard, said flap being oriented in a plane spaced from a plane of said guard.

10. (Original) The mower head of claim 9 wherein said actuating member comprises a hydraulic cylinder and a piston, said cylinder including a chamber surrounding said piston.

11. (Previously Amended) The mower head of claim 9 wherein one of said at least three sides comprises a plurality of angled sections.

12. (Previously Amended) The mower head of claim 11 wherein said guard includes a first wall which comprises a plurality of angled sections which matingly interconnect with said angled sections of said one of at least three sides and
5 a second wall which comprises a plurality of angled sections.

13. (Previously Amended) The mower head of claim 9 wherein said deck further comprises a fourth side and at least three side walls, one depending from at least three of said four sides, wherein two of said at least three side walls are rigid.

14. (Original) The mower head of claim 13 wherein one of said three side walls of said deck comprises a flap depending from one of said four sides of said deck.

15. (Original) The mower head of claim 9 wherein a top surface of said guard and a top surface of said deck are located in the same plane.

16. (Original) The mower head of claim 9 wherein a top surface of said guard and a top surface of said deck are located in different planes.

17. (Original) The mower head of claim 16 wherein

one of said at least three sides further comprises an extension which protrudes under said guard.

18. (Currently Amended) A mower head comprising:

a deck comprising:

at least four sides, and

three side walls, one depending from each of

5 three of said at least four sides, wherein two of said three side walls are rigid;

at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on an axis extending through said deck, said deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said blade; and

10 a guard assembly comprising:

an actuating member mounted on said deck,

a hinge mounted to and extending at an angle in relation to two adjacent ones of said at least four sides of said deck,

15 a guard attached to said actuating member and pivotally attached to said deck via said hinge, and

a flap which depends from said guard and is movable in relation to said guard, said flap being oriented in a plane spaced apart from a plane of said guard and

20 including a plurality of angled sections.

19. (Original) The mower head of claim 18 wherein said actuating member comprises a hydraulic cylinder and a piston assembly.

20. (Original) The mower head of claim 18 wherein one of said three side walls comprises a flap depending from one of said four sides of said deck.

21. (Original) The mower head of claim 18 wherein one of said deck at least four sides comprises a plurality of angled sections.

22. (Previously Amended) The mower head of claim 21 wherein said guard includes a first wall which comprises a plurality of angled sections which matingly interconnect with said angled sections of one of said at least four sides and
5 a second wall which comprises a plurality of angled sections.

23. (Original) The mower head of claim 18 wherein a top surface of said guard and a top surface of said deck are located in the same plane.

24. (Original) The mower head of claim 18 wherein a top surface of said guard and a top surface of said deck are located in different planes.

25. (Original) The mower head of claim 24 wherein one of said at least four sides further comprises an extension which protrudes under said guard.

26. (Cancelled) A mower head comprising:
a deck having at least three sides;
at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on an axis extending through said deck, said deck being
5 disposed above and generally parallel to said blade; and
a guard assembly comprising:
an actuating member mounted on said deck;
a guard pivotally attached to said deck at an obtuse angle in relation to sides of said deck which are
10 adjacent opposed ends of said guard, said guard including a first wall which comprises an approximately straight edge and a second wall which comprises a plurality of angled sections, and
a flap which depends from said guard and is oriented in a plane spaced apart from the plane of said guard.

27. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 26 further comprising a holding member for holding said guard in a first position in relation to said deck.

28. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 26 wherein said deck further comprises a flap depending from one of said at least three sides of said deck.

29. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 26 wherein two of said deck at least three sides are normal to each other and a third of said deck at least three sides is positioned at an obtuse angle in relation to said two of said at least three sides.

30. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 26 further comprising a hinge for pivotally mounting said guard to said deck.

31. (Cancelled) A mower head comprising:
a deck having at least three sides;
at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on an axis is extending through said deck, said deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said blade;
a guard assembly comprising:
a hinge extending at an angle between two of said at least three sides of said deck,
a guard pivotally attached to said deck via said hinge;
a holding member for holding said guard in one rotational position in relation to said deck; and
a flap extending from said guard and movable in relation to said guard, said flap being oriented in a plane spaced apart from a plane of said guard.

32. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 31 wherein

said holding member comprises a hydraulic cylinder and a piston, said cylinder including a chamber surrounding said piston.

33. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 32 wherein said guard is attached to one of said hydraulic cylinder and piston and another of said hydraulic cylinder and piston is attached to said deck.

34. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 31 wherein said guard includes a first wall comprising an approximately straight edge along which said guard is mounted to said hinge.

35. (Cancelled) A mower head comprising:
a deck comprising at least four sides;
at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on an axis extending through said deck, said deck being
5 disposed above and generally parallel to said blade;
a guard assembly comprising:
a hinge mounted on said deck, said hinge
extending at an obtuse angle in relation to sides of said deck
adjacent opposed ends of said hinge,
10 a guard pivotally attached to said deck via
said hinge;
a flap extending from said guard and is movable
with respect to said guard, said flap being oriented in a
plane spaced apart from a plane of said guard; and,
15 a linkage assembly for pivoting said guard in
relation to said deck, a first portion of said linkage
assembly being mounted to said guard and a second portion of
said linkage assembly being mounted to said deck.

36. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 35 wherein said linkage assembly first portion comprises a first flange and wherein said linkage assembly second portion comprises a

second flange.

37. (Cancelled) The mower head of claim 36 wherein said linkage assembly further comprises a hydraulic cylinder and a piston, wherein one of said hydraulic cylinder and piston is connected to said first flange and another of said 5 hydraulic cylinder and piston is connected to said second flange.

38. (Previously Added) The mower head of claim 1, wherein said flap is a resilient, one-piece flap.

39. (Previously Added) The mower head of claim 9, wherein said flap is a resilient, one-piece flap.

40. (Previously Added) The mower head of claim 18, wherein said flap is a resilient, one-piece flap.

41. (Cancelled) A mower head comprising:
a deck having at least three sides wherein one of said sides is a front side;
at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said 5 deck on an axis extending through said deck, said deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said blade;
a guard assembly comprising:
a hinge extending at an angle between said front side and one of said sides of said deck,
10 a guard pivotally attached to said deck via said hinge; and,
a holding member for holding said guard in one rotational position in relation to said deck.

42. (Cancelled) The mower guard of claim 41, wherein said angle of said hinge is an obtuse angle.

43. (Cancelled) The mower guard of claim 41, further comprising a flap extending from said guard and movable in relation to said guard, said flap being oriented in a plane spaced apart from a plane of said guard.

44. (Previously Amended) The mower guard of claim 1, wherein said angle is formed between about 12 o'clock and 2 o'clock positions in relation to the front side of said deck.

45. (Cancelled) A mower head comprising:
a deck comprising a front side, a back side, and a pair of side walls extending between said front and back sides;
5 at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on an axis extending through said deck, said deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said blade;
a guard assembly comprising:
a hinge mounted on said deck, said hinge
10 extending at an obtuse angle in relation to said front side and one of said side walls,
a guard pivotally attached to said deck via said hinge; and,
a linkage assembly for pivoting said guard in
15 relation to said deck, a first portion of said linkage assembly being mounted to said guard and a second portion of said linkage assembly being mounted to said deck.

46. (Cancelled) The mower guard of claim 45, further comprising a flap extending from said guard and movable in relation to said guard, said flap being oriented in a plane spaced apart from a plane of said guard.

47. (Previously Amended) The mower guard of claim 9, wherein said angle is formed between about 12 o'clock and 2 o'clock positions in relation to the front side of said deck.

48. (Previously Added) A mower head comprising:
a deck having a longitudinal axis, at least three sides including a forward side and at least one side wall depending from said deck;
5 at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on a rotational axis extending through said deck, said deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said blade; and
a guard assembly comprising:
an actuating member mounted on said deck,
10 a guard attached to said actuating member and pivotally attached to said deck via a hinge which extends at an obtuse angle in relation to two adjacent ones of said at least three sides of said deck, including said forward side, wherein said guard is located on said forward side and an
15 adjacent side such that said longitudinal axis extends near a side edge of said guard, and
a flap depending from said guard.

Last clause of canceled 35 pertaining to linkage

49. (Currently Amended) A mower head comprising:
a box shaped deck having five sides, four two opposed sides of which are perpendicular in relation to another two opposed sides ~~each other~~ and a fifth side of which is oriented
5 at an obtuse angle in relation to its adjacent sides;
at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on a rotational axis extending through said deck, said deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said blade; and
a guard ~~movably~~ pivotally attached to said deck fifth
10 side via a hinge which extends parallel to the deck fifth side, such that said guard selectively pivots out of a plane of said deck.